

VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

Division of Child Support Enforcement

Announces an Application

For Funding under the

Virginia Access and Visitation Grant Program

Deadline: February 18, 2005 by 5:00 p.m.

GRANT NUMBER G-CSE-05-08

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 - Note: The worksheet form may need to be printed on 8.5 X 14 inch paper.**

I. INTRODUCTION

Purpose

The purpose and intent of this Request for Application (RFA) is to award competitive grants to eligible agencies and organizations to support and facilitate noncustodial parents' access to and visitation of their children. This targets two groups of parents: separated and divorced parents and never married parents.

A major objective of this grant program in seeking to realize this purpose is to provide programs and activities that reach a large number of participants at a low cost per participant that result or can be expected to result in increased visitation of the child(ren) by noncustodial parents. Preferred projects and activities eligible for funding include mediation, parent education, and development of parenting plans. A limited amount of funding, depending largely on cost per participant, may be available for counseling, development of guidelines for visitation and custody arrangement, and visitation enforcement provided through monitoring and supervised visits between noncustodial parent and child.

Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants are public and not-for-profit agencies and organizations in the Commonwealth of Virginia. Only organizations or agencies that have received approval of their not-for-profit status per the IRS code as of February 18, 2005 are eligible to apply for this grant.

Funding Availability and Grant Period

A total of \$192,500 is provided as a direct result of provisions under Section 469B of Title IV-D of the Social Security Act as amended by Section 391 of the federal Personal Responsibility Work Opportunity and Reconciliation Act of 1996. This federal legislation followed reports from a growing number of studies indicating a positive relationship between (a) noncustodial parents' payment of child support and their access to and/or visitation of their children, and (b) the children's overall health and the amount of meaningful time they spend with both parents.

Selection of applications for funding and awarding of contracts are expected by early February, 2005. The grant period will begin as soon as the contract is executed, and shall end on September 30, 2005.

How to Apply

Applicants requesting funding must submit one original and four (4) copies of the grant application. Copies of this grant application, including the necessary grant application forms and instructions, may be printed from the DSS website. This may be accessed at www.dss.state.va.us. All of the Department's grant award notices are published on this website. Applications must be received no later than 5:00 p.m. on February 18, 2005.

Send applications to:

Bob Owen, Grant Administrator
Virginia Department of Social Services
Division of Child Support Enforcement
7 North Eighth Street, 1st Floor
Richmond, Virginia 23219

If you have additional questions regarding the grant application, you may contact Mr. Owen at the above address or:

Telephone: 804 726-7434
E-mail: bob.owen@dss.virginia.gov

Applications received after the deadline will not be considered. **Emailed or faxed applications will not be considered.**

II. PROGRAM OVERVIEW AND REQUIREMENTS

Program Overview and Requirements

Within the broad program purpose stated in Section I, grant funds can be used for activities specifically including the following:

- mediation (both voluntary and mandatory)
- parenting education
- development of parenting plans
- counseling
- visitation enforcement (including monitoring, supervision and neutral drop-off and pickup), and
- development of guidelines for visitation and alternative custody arrangements.

As previously stated in Section I, a major objective of this grant program in Virginia is to provide programs and activities that reach a large number of participants at a low cost per participant and can be expected to result in increased visitation of the child(ren) by noncustodial parents. The individual programs and activities may impact a particular area of the Commonwealth or operate statewide.

III. APPLICATION PREPARATION AND SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

In order to be considered for funding, all applicants must submit two originals and three (3) copies of the following documents in the following order:

1. GRANT APPLICATION COVER SHEET (with signatures)
2. ASSURANCES Forms (with signatures)
 - a. Federal Program Assurances
 - b. General Grant Conditions and Assurances
3. WORK PLAN NARRATIVE - Not to exceed 10 pages (excluding budget forms)
4. PROPOSED BUDGET – must include both
 - a. Itemized Budget form and
 - b. A clear explanation of expenses in narrative form.
5. LETTERS OF SUPPORT or COLLABORATIVE AGREEMENTS
6. W-9 Form

Applications must be signed by the fiscal agent and the project manager. All information requested must be submitted. Failure to submit all information requested may result in VDSS requiring prompt submission of missing information and/or giving a lowered evaluation of the proposal. Applications which are substantially incomplete or lack key information may be rejected by the agency. Mandatory requirements are those required by law or regulation or are such that they cannot be waived and are not subject to negotiation.

No other attachments will be considered.

1. GRANT APPLICATION COVER SHEET

A Grant Application form has been provided and shall be submitted as the cover page of the grant application. Applications which lack required original signatures of the fiscal agent and project manager will not be considered.

2. REQUIREMENTS AND ASSURANCES

Federal Assurances Form SF-424B and Form W-9 must be completed.

3. WORK PLAN NARRATIVE

The work plan narrative cannot exceed 10 pages, must be double spaced in a 12-point font, and must have one inch margins on white paper only. It must be organized in a manner that clearly addresses each of the following, in the order listed. Narratives that are concise and specific will be viewed most favorably.

- A. Description of Applicant Agency – purpose, goals, organizational structure
- B. Project Description – provide a short summary
- C. Need for the Project – provide a needs assessment
- D. Project Goals and Objectives -- brief summary of goal(s), objective(s), and key activities proposed
- E. Target Population – indicate number of participants, target population, and the geographical area to be served by your program.
- F. Possible barriers – describe possible barriers that must be overcome to achieve the objective(s).
- G. Description of Staff – identify staff, their qualifications and responsibilities
- H. Project Continuation – explain the organization's commitment to the program and present a plan for continuing the project
- I. Collaboration and Coordination – attach a list of collaborative and coordinating agencies and include their roles
- J. Work Plan – complete the work plan using the form included with this RFA
- K. Matching Funds – the budget must reflect a ten percent (10%) match of the total amount requested by the grantee using cash, in-kind expenses, or through fees; complete the attached Match Documentation form
- L. Other Attachments –
 - 1. A statement from the applicant's fiscal officer must be attached certifying that the agency has sufficient monies to cover the program expenses on a monthly basis as grant funds will be awarded on a cost reimbursable basis.
 - 2. If the applicant agency is a private not-for-profit agency, a copy of the IRS form(s) certifying that the applicant organization is exempted from federal income tax payment under Section 501 of the IRS Code is required.
 - 3. Copies of licenses or state-certifications for staff providing counseling or mediation services.

4. OUTCOMES

Describe specifically, the outcome(s) you hope to achieve by implementing the proposed project.

State the measurable goal(s)/objective(s) of the proposed initiative and the activities proposed to achieve the goals and objectives established.

Note: In addition to any other outcomes you are attempting to achieve, the specific goal of this grant is to increase time noncustodial parents spend with their children. Reporting is required as to whether each noncustodial parent participant's time spent with his/her child(ren) increased, or would be expected to increase, as a result of participation in one or more of the activities funded with this grant. If this cannot actually be measured, the participant(s) must be surveyed to determine if this is a likely outcome.

5. PROPOSED BUDGET

Complete the Itemized Budget Sheet. Attach to the Itemized Budget Sheet a budget narrative that includes (a) description of each proposed expenditure and (b) justification for the proposed expenditure by explaining the need for it.

All expenses included in the application must be allowable under federal and state regulations, must be reasonable and necessary, and must apply directly to the project. Grant funding must not be used to:

- to supplant other funding;
- pay for construction, capital improvements, land, or vehicles;
- provide sectarian purpose or activity, including worship or instruction; or
- satisfy any requirement for the expenditure of non-federal funds or a condition for the receipt of federal funds.

6. LETTERS OF SUPPORT

Current letters of support or collaborative agreements from a minimum of 3 agencies or organizations directly involved in the proposed program or activity must be included. It is suggested that the letters include representation from the local public school system, a corporate leader or Chamber of Commerce director, as well as a local government official.

IV. PROCESS OF REVIEW AND CRITERIA FOR AWARD

The Request for Applications process is a competitive process and awards are given based on a review of criteria defined within the RFA and negotiations of final terms. The Department may withdraw the RFA or reject applications at any time prior to the award.

Specific criteria to be used by grant reviewers:

- 45 points Describe the services your organization offers which relate to the components listed in the Purpose section of Section I above. As part of your description, please give a per participant (e.g., hourly, per class, per session) cost for the delivery of your services.
- 25 points Provide information and/or statistical data documenting the effectiveness of your program in the delivery of the service described in Section II above.
- 30 points State the method(s) you will employ to measure or project the required data of whether or not the noncustodial parent increased or was expected to increase the time with his/her child(ren) in each case situation that you address.

Total possible score = 100 points

V. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Quarterly reports detailing progress shall be submitted to the department within 30 days after the end of each quarter, except for the final quarter. The Local Provider Worksheet form is to be used for both quarterly and final reporting of case activities and other information. Barriers to meeting objectives outlined in work plan shall be reported, and solutions to such barriers shall be explored and shall be included with the quarterly reports.

A final report is due no later than 10/31/31, and will be submitted in the same format as the federal report format included in Section III. This will include totals of case activities and demographic information on the Local Service Provider Worksheet, and other program information on the Local Service Provider Summary.

VI. FORMS -- attached